

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-07 IO-13

CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /105 W

-----172250Z 094151 /46

P 170446Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2880

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCPAC

COMIDEASTFOR

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

USMISSION USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 0981

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XO, NZ, PARM

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SUBJECT: DEMILITARIZATION OF INDIAN OCEAN

REF: (AL WELLINGTON 0924 (DTG 150333Z MAR 77) (NOTAL)

(B) WELLINGTON 0338 (DTG 300120Z JAN 76)

PRIME MINISTER MULDOON HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT SYDNEY AIRPORT
MARCH 16 UPON BEGINNING OF HIS VISIT TO AUSTRALIA, MIDDLE EAST AND

EUROPE. INTER ALIA, HE WAS QUESTIONED AGAIN ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROPOSAL FOR COMPLETE DEMILITARIZATION OF INDIAN OCEAN. ACCORDING TO RADIO REPORTS BEING CARRIED IN NEW ZEALAND, PRIME MINISTER MULDOON RESPONDED:

QUOTE WELL, I HAVEN'T YET GOT TO GRIPS WITH MR. CARTER AND I DON'T THINK THAT MR. FRASER HAS EITHER. WE BOTH WANT TO GO OVER AND MEET HIM. I MEAN HE IS THE PRESIDENT OF THE MOST POWERFUL COUNTRY IN THE WORLD; HE IS ALSO A PEANUT FARMER FROM GEORGIA. NOW WE WOULD HOPE THAT IN DUE TIME HE WOULD ABSORB THE REALITIES OF AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD, AND AMERICANS CAN NOT (HIS EMPHASIS) RETREAT FROM THEIR GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITIES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE SAID LAST WEEK --- IT HASN'T REACHED ME YET --- BUT I'M BOUND TO SAY THAT ALL THE ADVICE THAT HE'LL BE GETTING IS THAT IF YOU LEAVE A BLANK SPOT IN YOUR GLOBAL STRATEGY THERE'S SOMEONE OVER THERE IN THE KREMLIN WHO'S GOING TO BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO FILL IT IN. UNQUOTE

2. BOTH MFA AND MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAVE INQUIRED OF EMBASSY CONCERNING BACKGROUND FOR PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS STATEMENT OF LAST WEEK ON INDIAN OCEAN. (SEE REFTEL A.) IN ADDITION, MFA DEFENSE DIVISION HEAD (ATKINS) HAS NOTED THAT PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS STATEMENT IN SYDNEY IS CONSISTENT WITH MULDOON'S LONG-STANDING AND PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED VIEWS ON IMPORTANCE TO NEW ZEALAND OF INDIAN OCEAN, DIEGO GARCIA AND US
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GLOBAL ROLE. (SEE REFTEL B.)

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S CHIEF CONCERNS ARE TWOFOLD: A) INDIAN OCEAN DEMILITARIZATION SHOULD BE ENTERED INTO ONLY FROM A POSITION OF STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND SOVIET UNION WITHIN INDIAN OCEAN REGION; AND B) THAT THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF UNITED STATES' ALLIES (I.E. NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA IN THIS INSTANCE) SHOULD BE TAKEN FULLY INTO ACCOUNT AND INTO FULL CONSULTATIONS IN MATTERS INVOLVING INDIAN OCEAN. PRIME MINISTER MULDOON'S SYDNEY COMMENTS SEEM TO REFLECT CONCERN FOR THE FORMER AND IRRITATION AT THE LACK OF THE LATTER.

4. AS DEPARTMENT IS QUITE AWARE, BOTH PRIME MINISTERS MULDOON AND FRASER HAVE OVER PAST YEAR BEEN STRONG, OUTSPOKEN SUPPORTERS OF ANZUS AND OF CLOSER DEFENSE RELATIONS WITH U.S. U.S. NAVY NPWS WERE WELCOMED TO BOTH COUNTRIES LAST YEAR FOR FIRST TIME IN 12 YEARS.

5. MULDOON'S COMMENTS ARE TYPICALLY DIRECT AND, WHILE SURPRISING, PROBABLY NOT INTENDED TO BE IN ANY WAY OFFENSIVE. HE IS RATHER CONVEYING, ALBEIT IN A NOT TO SUBTLE FASHION, CONCERN FOR NOT BEING INFORMED/CONSULTED OVER A MATTER WHICH HE FEELS DIRECTLY INVOLVES NEW ZEALAND THE SECURITY INTERESTS HE HAS BEEN PRESSING FOR THE PAST SIXTEEN MONTHS.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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